THE

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PORTRAIT OF CALEB B. PETICORD.

HE was a native of the State of Maryland. He had advantages in literature which were more than common; and when he came to mature age he went in quest of the truth, searching among books and men. The want of knowledge of truth subjected him to many dejections; which some shake off by dipping into error; but he was cast down, but not in despair. He still continued to seek truth where it was most likely to be found, among the works of the most virtuous of mankind, and amongst those who professed to know the truth, and did not dishonour their profession by wicked lives. There he found it, even the pearl of great price. He then sold all in affection, and by industry bought that field.

He soon found that true philosophy concentrated in the bible. This was the book of books to him. He studied it day and night. He had a common-place book, which was nothing more than a selection of the most precious texts from the bible, viz. such as supported the redemption of men by the atonement made by Christ, justification by faith, sanctification through the Spirit, and glorification to the faithful soul.

After he had fed in these rich pastures for two years, he grew so that he was able, and almost willing, to preach, and to lead others there also; and notwithstanding his great diffidence and modesty, he commenced preacher in the year 1777, in the most dangerous time for a man to

become a public man, especially as the people he laboured with and among were supposed to be all tories or king's men, and by the tories taken for rebels against the king and church of England. Even then this timid man commenced. His wisdom and prudence were great almost to a proverb; for the most captious or friendly could never discover that he had any political principle. Yet all that did not secure him from receiving many severe blows from a man in Dorchester county, who found him alone on the high-way, and whipped him over the face and eyes, so that he carried the mark down to the grave with him, and I suppose he will have them in his face in the day of judgment.

His zeal was equal to his knowledge or nearly so. I say nearly so, for he never would preach if he could get any body to preach in his place. He would never venture to stand up to preach till he could feel the anointing of grace afresh, till he thought he had the Spirit of God to assist him. This caused him to be often ready to faint: for notwithstanding his ability as a speaker, he would venture on nothing in public from his natural or acquired ability; but always leaned on the arm of Christ. He was to preach at a certain time near Burlington in the Jersey, and while the congregation were collecting, he was in prayer to God for his presence. He said to Mr. Sterling, who was witness to the travail of soul he had for the aid of the spirit, "What shall I do? I have no text to preach from. The whole bible will not afford me a text that I can preach on. Pray for me, that I may be led to a text, that the people may be profited." Thus was he exercised day after day, previous to preaching. Success crowned his labours wherever he went. Prejudice was sure to fly in some degree, and conviction to flash to the heart of the guilty, while he drew the bow like a giant. He slew the enemies of Jesus. Wounding and healing was frequent, when this man (who was one of the founders of the evangelical church of America,) laboured in the word and doctrine. His patience was equal to his zeal; for although he was a stout man, and one full of agility, he gave his back to the smiter, and his cheek to him who beat off the skin; and though he had the tongue of the

learned, he used no railing accusation—but pray don't hurt me, Mr. M———.

His love was equa' to his patience. All who knew him, and are still alive, can witness the sweetness of his temper. Grace had laid the rough part of his nature. Smooth courtesy and humility were his prominent features.

His voice was musical: he was great as a speaker naturally, and made so abundantly more by grace, which gave him a fiery tongue, to speak forth the praises of the Redeemer. He was a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief, yet dead to the world, much devoted to God.

He departed this life in the year 1785, near Abington in the State of Maryland. He died in the full assurance of future glory, and of resurrection to eternal life in Christ our Lord. He left no one to mourn his loss but his brethren in the ministry, and his children in the bonds of the gospel.

THE EXPERIENCE OF ABIGAIL DAVIS.

MRS. DAVIS was the daughter of Thomas and Phebe Tompkins, inhabitants of the town of Greensburgh. In the early part of her life, the Methodists frequently preached at their house. Her parents then became members of the church: but if at this time any serious impressions had been made upon her mind, they were like the morning cloud or early dew which quickly passeth away. She grew up in all the follies of the age. Deeply immersed in the pleasures of life, pursuing those diversions and vain amusements commonly practised by the young and giddy.

Some years after she had arrived to the stature of a woman, she married and became the wife of Charles Davis. Her health soon began to decline; she caught a heavy cold, which brought on a consumption, under which she lingered about two years; then was cut down

in the prime of life, and fell a prey to relentless death. In the former part of her illness no signs of penitence appeared in her: but as her disorder increased, she grew more thoughtful, and began to consider her latter end. She found death was making advances upon her, and knew she was not fit to appear in judgment. Those solemn and important words of our Lord's, "Ye must be born again," had often sounded in her ears; and she was convinced, that unless she experienced regenerating grace she must perish eternally.

Some months before she was removed from this stage of action, I went to the house to visit a pious young man who was near eternity. He was so weak he could say but little; but his mind appeared calm and serene. He was waiting with patience his approaching dissolution. Mrs. Davis seemed affected at his situation, and was very attentive to him. She observed he was lower in body than herself, but said she had the same disorder, and should not long survive him. I then reminded her of the necessity of laying in store a good foundation for time to come. This, says she, I am striving for.

Prayer meetings were frequently held at the house of Nathaniel Tompkins, who lived in the neighbourhood where she resided, and was a near relation of hers. These meetings she attended as long as her strength of body would admit, and was often heard to express desires to flee the wrath to come. From this her brother and his wife she received many holy warnings, and loving admonitions, which by the grace of God was rendered a blessing to her. She became very fond of them, though in the time of her health she sought after company more suitable to her age, and the gaiety of her disposition. About a week before her decease she went to pay them a visit, and was taken so ill at their house, that it was with great difficulty she could be removed back to her father's.

Hearing that she was very low, and that she wished to see me, I hastened to her as soon as possible, and found her much altered in looks since I had seen her before. I judged from her appearance she had almost finished her course below, and she seemed very sensible it was the case. She told me, This world was nothing to her, for

she must shortly leave it. But she appeared deeply concerned about her future state. Much did she lament her mispent time, and grieved that she had not attended to the important concerns of her soul, when she was in the full anjoyment of her health and strength. She said now her bodily infirmities were such as almost unfitted her for every thing. I encouraged her the best I could by telling her of the willingness of Jesus to receive returning prodigals. Her pious neighbours and friends visited her and offered up their joint petitions to Almighty God in her behalf. There was more than two or three agreed touching this one thing, that her soul should be blest. The dear woman suffered much. She could get but little repose, and the want of sleep affected her head, so that she greatly feared a delirium would ensue; and as she found her end fast approaching, expected she should be launched into eternity unprepared. This thought filled her mind with the deepest sorrow, but her senses were preserved to admiration, considering her fever and extreme pain in her head. One day she asked her mother, if she thought the Lord would receive such a sinner as she had been. Her mother told her the door of mercy was open to her, and if she continued to seek she would assuredly find.

I paid her several visits, and spent some days and nights with her. The last time I left her alive, she was in great distress of body, and I believe still greater distress of mind. Some of her friends began to be discouraged, but others were strong in faith, giving glory to God, and were firmly persuaded her prayers and the prayers of God's people for her would not all fall to the ground; but expected to see them answered to the joy of many souls. This afflicted woman rested with great and solemn weight on my mind, and I felt a travail of soul for her. The next morning early I was informed of the happy change that had taken place in her the evening before.

After I left her, the distress of her mind seemed to increase. Her brother Nathaniel and his wife were sent for, and whilst he was wrestling and agonizing with God in prayer, the Lord visited her soul, and filled her with joy and peace in believing. After he had concluded, her friends were called around her bed, and she openly declared what God had done for her soul; she said she had

been much beset with a man fearing spirit; but, blessed be God, said she, I find it entirely removed, and I am not afraid or ashamed to tell what the Lord has done for my soul. In addressing herself to her sisters, she begged them to take warning by her, and not to put off repentance to a sick and dying bed. She said the agony of her mind had been beyond expression; that for two days and nights she had scarcely dared to close her eyes for fear she should wake in hell; but she had besought the Lord to visit her with the manifestation of his love, and strengthen her to declare it. Glory to his name, she cried, he has answered my prayer, and lifted upon me the light of his countenance. Though my sins were as scarlet, he has made them like wool. Though of a crimson die, I am washed whiter than snow.

She looked on her husband, who stood weeping by her bed-side, told him he was near and dear to her, and begged him to remember he had a soul to save, and prepare to meet her in glory. Her aged father, bowed down under a weight of years, having numbered eighty-six revolving suns, she desired might be called to her; when he drew near she addressed him in the most dutiful and affectionate manner, and said she was going a little before him, but he must soon follow her; and she hoped to meet him in the upper regions. With great fervour of spirit she exhorted all her friends to seek the salvation of their souls, that they might insure an inheritance beyond the grave.

I was present at her decease. A few moments before she expired, I heard her repeat these words: I have an interest in Jesus, and a treasure above.

I had forgot to observe, that after she had been speaking to her dear old father, he turned from her with expressions of joy in his countenance, and said, "Instead of this being a time of mourning, it is a time of rejoicing."

She took leave of all present, and with cheerfulness.—Darkness veiled her eyes to all below, and she fell asleep in Jesus, in the prime of life.

AN ADDRESS

To the Rev. RALPH WILLISTON, late Itinerant Minister in the Evangelical Church of America, and Pastor of the English Lutheran Congregation in Zion Church in the City of New-York, delivered at his Installation in Office by the Rev. John C. Kunze, D. D. Senior of the Lutheran Clergy in the State of New-York, November 10, 1803.

On John xxi. 15.—*Feed my lambs.*

Reverend and dear brother,

YOUR call as Pastor of the English Lutheran Congregation of this city, lays the duty upon me, to present you in this capacity to your flock, and to introduce you to your holy office with a few remarks and admonitions. As you are not a novitiate in the sacred function as a servant in the house of God, and as the Evangelical Lutheran Ministration of this State in its last session has acknowledged and received you as a brother and one of its members by the right hand of fellowship, I shall not undertake to teach you. You have been a considerable time on trial in this congregation. Their mind remains fixed on you. My brethren have heard you and I have heard you before. Our judgment, that you teach the way of God in truth has been the result of it. But it is a general practice in our church, introduced by antiquity, and sanctified by useful impressions both in the hearts of the minister and the people, to remind publicly and before many witnesses, the servant of God, at his entering into office, of the great duties of a spiritual shepherd. Our holy records abound in texts suitable to such occasions. There are such particularly in the three epistles of St. Paul, which justly are stiled the pastoral letters, that contain whole catalogues of pastoral duties. But I feel at this time quite a particular predilection for the words of our common Lord and chief Shepherd, delivered to Peter at his reinstatement into the apostolic office, from which, conscious of his deep fall, he thought himself excluded, John xxi. 15, " Feed

my lambs." No admonition in all the bible seemed to me to contain so comprehensive and so powerful a charge to a spiritual leader entering into office, as these three words, which, in the dialect our Saviour used, made only two. Permit me, therefore, dear brother, to make some observations on them. They contain a charge to a labourer in the house of God, who enters into office. I request you to direct with me your attention to the author of this charge, to the time of delivering, and to the duty it enjoins.

The words with which I address you this day, proceed from the owner of the sheep. Though the man who is commissioned by him to take charge of a part of his flock, may occasionally use the appropriate language, and say, my flock, my sheep; yet the exactness of the expression can only be justified by the necessity of distinguishing. There is no other shepherd, but he who speaks in my text, who by using them, indicates absolute property. We know him, as the eternal Son of God, to whose omniscience Peter in his answer appeals, who is the great God as well as the Saviour, Tit. ii. 13. We know, that through him the world has been made. We have yet on record his farewell declaration, Matt. xxviii. 18, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. But we are happy to find, that it is not this ground, on which the apostles rest the absolute dominion of our Lord over his flock, which would place them in an equal situation with them, who tremble at the knowledge that there is a God, and who shall wail at his last appearance. It is a consideration of infinite importance to us, that this property is derived from the purchase right. This gave energy to the apostolic charge we read, Acts xx. 28, "Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost has made you overseers, to feed the church of God,‡ which he has purchased with his own blood." When therefore, in the words before quoted, Tit. ii. 13, Paul connects the two characters of our Lord, that he is God

‡ Some wish to change the reading of "God" into "Christ," and some into "Lord," to enervate so clear a demonstration of the true and absolute divinity of Christ. But Ignatius speaks of the blood of God. Tertullian, in an address to his wife, (ch. 2.) says, "With what are we redeemed? With the blood of God." Chrysostom repeats, in his observations on this place, the words "blood of God," three times.

and Saviour, to impress the mind of Titus with the sense of duty, on account of the right of property of the Lord, he derives in the following verse this right, not from his divine power, but from his having redeemed us from all iniquity, and purified unto himself a peculiar people; but the appellation, "great God," was used to point out the dignity of a people that belonged to such a Redeemer, and that had been thought worthy of such a price. This appropriating language is made use of every where in the Old and New Testament. With what zeal he who spoke by the prophets to the fathers, vindicates to himself this right of property, may be seen Ex. xxxiv. 8, 10, 11. In the last verse he says, he himself will collect and select them, (in the original,) with which we may compare Matt. xxv. 32. In the New Testament let me only mention the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth, when he owned a sheep which had been disowned by the Pharisees, John x. 1—18, compared with ch. ix. 35. There he not only spoke of his profession, and the mode of treating this his property, v. 9, but also of his intention to die for his sheep, v. 11, and to preserve them unto the end against any attempt to tear them from him, v. 12, v. 28, 29. If therefore the sheep mentioned in this charge are the absolute property of our Lord, if this right is grounded upon a purchase, and if the price is nothing less than the blood of Christ, I cannot judge otherwise, but that a disregard to the souls committed to our care, is in the strictest sense of the word, sacrilege, and the commissioner of the chief Shepherd by such neglect and indifference has trodden under foot the Son of God, accounting the blood of the new covenant, with which he was sanctified, an unholy thing. How easily may, by such an inattention, a weak brother perish, for whom Christ died.

But he, into whose lips grace is poured, and out of whose mouth nevertheless a two-edged sword goes, does not speak to us, as he spoke to Peter. The men, who followed not cunning fables, alone saw his glory on earth, and heard his voice. But happily these men are those, whom we shall hear, if we wish to hear, Christ. Only a few were the first commissioners; but the church has the word of the Lord, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." We cannot sufficiently

praise him for the addition of the words, "unto the end of the world." Men of corrupt minds in our days, prone to explain away all the power of God and the consolation of the gospel from the bible, would certainly make the twelve apostles the sole objects of this last promise of our Lord. But in honour to common sense and sound reason, I hope they cannot. Is Christ yet with us? he speaks yet to us. To perceive him by the external senses is the prerogative of eternity, and on the stage of trial the object of our hope. But here we content ourselves with hearing him in his word, by the inward voice of his Spirit, and by directions received by the instrumentality of his delegates. Christ has promised to send prophets and wise men, and scribes, Matt. xxiii. 34. Prophets derive their authority from an immediate mission. The delegation of the others is effected by the intervention of men. When Paul assures the Galatians, that he was sent neither by men nor through men, Gal. i. 1, he intimates, that his mission is of the first kind. Others, who are their successors, stiled by the Lord wise men and scribes, are sent through men, yet nevertheless by God. The instruments employed in such missions, are of different kinds. The congregations, who give us a call, the teachers, who prepare us for the service of the house of God, the senior brethren, who signify their consent by the imposition of their hands, and the brother, who introduces us to the flock that has called us, may all be considered as instruments. The instrument, if sound and unimpaired, performs the will of its employer. He is God, and therefore love. Of such an extent is his love, that all who believe on him shall have eternal life. But of him on whom we are to believe, we must have heard, and this presupposes sending, be it mediate or immediate. On messengers different dignities are stamped, 1 Cor. xii. 28, Eph. i. 11; but on each of the lambs of Christ the purchase right through his blood. And in this perhaps alone consists equality. If the preacher of salvation becomes a stone of stumbling to a child, Matt. xviii. 6, or to him that is weak, 1 Cor. viii. 9, a mill-stone were better hanged on his neck, to drown him in the sea. The blood of every sinner who perishes, is required of him whose office it was, and in whose power it laid to prevent it.

Addressed therefore with the language of the prophets, as, "Cry aloud, spare not," Isai. lviii. 1, or, "Son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel," let us remember, my brother, that it was the spirit of Christ, who was in the prophets, 1 Pet. i. 11, and it is he who speaks to us in behalf of his property; or called upon with a word of St. Peter or Paul, "Feed the flock of God, which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but with a ready mind, or as the original expresses it, with hearts desire: or give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Neglect not the gift of God that is in thee, 1 Pet. v. 2, 1 Tim. 11, 13, 14. It is the voice of your friend you hear, for he has said to these men, He who hears you, hears me. Though with words of the friends of the bridegroom, this charge is laid to our heart; yet belonging ourselves to these friends, we soon perceive, and one reminds the other, as John did Peter, John xxi. 7, *It is the Lord.*

Permit me to add some observations concerning the time, when such a charge is pressed on our soul.

The immediate call to Peter, my text speaks of, was as I suppose, at the time of his reinstatement into the apostolic office. Conscious of his deep fall, he thought himself excluded. This supposition, in my opinion, is not weakened by the circumstance, that the angel announcing to the first visitors the resurrection of the Lord, gave them a direct charge, not to exclude Peter. This alone, instead of removing apprehensions, that he, like Judas, was excluded from the twelve, could increase them. Why named separately? Repenting sinners, though justification in the divine judgment is of an instanneous operation, know nothing of such a sudden transition from the sense of damnation to the assurance of justification. Though I own, the peace with God put together with justifying grace, Rom. v. 1, speaks of the sensation of this peace; yet Paul speaks to converted and experienced Christians. Such know and wish never to forget, to what source they are to trace their peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, Ps. xxxii. 1, 2, ciii. 2. Yet it is not perceived without strife and struggle. Nor is that circumstance in contradiction, that our Lord appeared to

Peter before his appearance in the evening assembly of the disciples. For we must admit a difference between reception to grace and pardon, and to the number of spiritual leaders. The melting look of the Saviour, and the stream of repenting, at the same time consoling tears, Luke xxii. 61, 62, had in so far by all means created a spark of hope that he was not a cast-a-way, and pointing him out by name at the grave, whilst it was liable of bearing a construction to his disadvantage in one respect, insured, on the other hand, his remaining interest in Christ. Repentance and godly sorrow was the immediate effect of the Lord's attention to him; but to have the word of pardon and mercy from his own mouth was Peter's great object. We are at full liberty to display all the powers of our devout imagination in contemplating this interview. How he fell down before him, how he sued for mercy and grace, how he vowed new obedience and eternal fidelity, how he professed unrestricted readiness to suffer for his cause—Yet to be his apostle to the world, might not have been part of his demands. This greatest of all human dignities, to be Christ's apostle again, was bestowed upon Peter, when his Lord thus addressed him, *Feed my lambs.*

Whatever superiority there is in the dignity of an apostle, compared with that of a shepherd of a single flock, they have that duty in common, to feed Christ's lambs. And if the conversion of one soul creates a festival in heaven, he who was instrumental to it, is not looked upon with indifference from heaven. Peter, therefore, addressing the presbyters of the church, 1 Ep. ch. v. 1, includes himself into that class. Every pious and faithful labourer in the church of God has his call from God, though such as have not a general call to form the church, have their divine call through men. As the reception, they hear in their spirit the voice of the Lord, Feed my lambs.

If we in earthly matters are authorised to call sometimes the voice of a friend the voice of God, we may certainly hear our Lord repeat this holy injunction to us, Feed my lambs, when we are ordained as regular teachers in his church. Be the gifts of those who address us at that occasion, small, common, or eminent, the faithful candidate feels the power of God. As Christ in future will speak through him, Be ye reconciled to God, 2 Cor. v. 20, so

here he speaks perceivably to him, to his feelings and conscience: Reconcile my race to me, preserve those who cost me my blood; actuated by love to me, feed my flock.

Not less audible is the voice of the friend of souls, at the time when we actually enter into office. It has been usual at all times in the church, wherever it is practicable, to signalize such a commencement with some kind of solemnity, to increase the useful impression, both in the hearers and the new labourer. This intention has caused our present meeting, and I make no doubt the power of our pressnt Lord will speak in the soul of a brother labourer, who will feed this flock, because he loves its owner, and in the souls of these lambs, who, whether they know it yet or not, are his blood-bought property, notwithstanding the feebleness of the instrument. This hour, my brother, will be and remain engraven in your soul. He speaks to you—I am confident you feel it. Short but comprehensive is the charge, when he commands you to feed these souls. And you all, dear evangelical brethren, short but all-comprehensive is the expression, when he pleads his right to you, his relation to you, his tenderness to you, his thoughts of peace towards you, for he calls you, *my lambs*. You see now, that you are not your own. You perceive now, that he does not give you a leader in his anger, not a schoolmaster, to circumscribe your liberty, or to create you pain, but a man, who is charged to feed you, because you are his, and it is not his will, that you should perish.

Similar emotions must in future create every object of this flock in greater or smaller number here convened. Think often, my brother, I pray you, when you enter this door, when you ascend these steps, when you behold these heads, the charge is repeated. You hear your Lord say, Feed my lambs. Let then the love of Christ constrain you, not to shun declaring all the counsel of God. Our church, you know, to whose doctrine you have declared your assent, feels no hesitation, to explain the motive Paul adds for enforcing such a constraining love, 2 Cor. v. 14, in the first obvious sense. Since one died for all, all you will see here at any time assembled, are those for whom Christ died, and as many as will receive

this atoning death by faith, have actually died with him. They are, therefore, justified by free grace; but they have now to learn lessons from your lips, how to live to God, how to remain in Christ, how to keep alive the remembrance of having been purged from their old sins, how to avoid being entangled again therein, how to walk circumspectly, not to fall away and crucify the Son of God afresh, for in such case they would die, notwithstanding the former assurance of life, Rom. viii. 13. Keep yourself pure from such blood. But not only from the blood of those, who were once enlightened, and had tasted of the heavenly gift, and had been made partakers of the Holy Ghost, but have turned from the holy commandment delivered unto them, but of the blood of such too, who never had been made sensible yet of the dignity to which Jesus's death gives them a right to aspire, who never awoke yet from their sleep, or arose from their death, to enjoy the light of their Saviour. One thing we know of them—all the rest the searcher of the hearts knows—they are those, for whom Christ died. If they die, their blood is upon their head: but if they were wilfully neglected by the watchman, it shall likewise be required of him.

In a like manner, every call to a soul, either bodily sick or spiritually afflicted, is a repetition of this charge. Think, my fellow-labourer, the man of Macedonia appears, and bids you to come and help him. Or rather think, your Lord and master commands you to feed this lamb. We are debtors in some respect to all men. The prospect of saving a soul is a warrant for us to go under any roof. Of this prospect, however, we are to judge as wise men. But the wisdom that is from above is peaceable and without hypocrisy. Such as boast in another man's line, do not come to help a soul, but to captivate a soul. Under the appearance of upholding their usefulness, they undermine that of others. Every soul belonging to a congregation, is confederate with its pastor. The engagement is mutual, and an holy one. Offending the weakest brother, is an heinous crime; much more so offending a labouring servant. I would, however, nevertheless, never refuse to enter into spiritual conversation with any soul that desires it. But by this interview the regular teacher shall never be the loser. The obligation

to him shall be explained and enforced; and if there is a moral possibility, I will employ all eloquence I am possessed of, to be his panegyrist. To perform a parochial duty, no consideration shall induce me, and if criminations represent the Shepherd of that soul as having forfeited the confidence, I will plead my incompetency to be the judge, and with respect to the accuser, urge the unlawfulness to be his own judge. But innumerable are the instances among us, that sheep are yet without a shepherd. To all of them we will consider ourselves, for the sake of the love of God, indebted, if they give us their call. If so, much more are we indebted to every individual of our congregation. Though the language of politeness may solicit, each has a right to demand our coming. Paul, Acts xx. 31, clearly intimates, that his labour was not confined to speaking in public, when he reminds the Ephesians, that he ceased not day and night to warn every one with tears; and St. James presents to our mind the possible result of such a condescension to individuals, James v. 20. The consequence may be nothing less than saving a soul from death, an effect to which every one attaches the highest possible importance, who believes in the dignity of the human soul, in the veracity of the Saviour when speaking of the lost sheep, and in the gospel truth, that Christ died for the sins of the world. Private instructions and directions cannot be misunderstood as to the personal object they are aimed at, which is, in innumerable instances, the case in public preaching, where the Pharisee too often thanks that he is not like the publican and sinner described by the speaker. Objections can be heard and removed, the want of a foundation in a self-created hope, demonstrated despondency and despair in a weak vessel, which is not to be destroyed, because a blessing is yet in it, prevented. St. Paul speaks of individuals, when he exclaims, Rom. xiv. 15, Destroy not him for whom Christ died. Methinks I hear him say to every watchman in the house of God, Save him for whom Christ died.

Many occasions could be added, which renew that charge to our conscience, Feed my lambs. The youth of our congregations claim our particular attention. Though I subscribe not to the interpretation of some,

who think, that as Christ first mentions *lambs*, and twice after that *sheep*, his first and principal care was directed to this part of the Christian congregations; yet I hesitate not to declare, that it is his principal care, and ought to be the principal care of each of his servants. Finding no foundation for this remark in the expression "*lambs*," I find it in the nature of the thing, I find it in the wisdom of the Lord, I find it in many of his actions and declarations. He who neglects the youth of his congregation is a foolish shepherd indeed. He knows nothing of the power of early impressions. He would have stopped the vociferations of the children in the temple, in the same manner as these philosophical church teachers, who only at the close of the eighteenth century found out, that children must not be taught to pray nor learn to read by the instrument of the bible. In this secret wisdom, my brother, let us never be initiated. Our catechisations shall be as sacred to us as our sermons. The children assembled before our eyes shall represent this charge as written on so many foreheads as there are children, Feed my lambs. Here we may exclaim, is wisdom. Who would not wish to be a labourer together with God, in a circle of beings, of whom his Son declares, Such is the kingdom of God? Who would not be delighted to work a field less accessible to a tares-sowing enemy, than others? What disciples of Christ would not prefer giving lessons in a school where neither the Jew requires a sign, nor the Greek seeks after wisdom! Here the language of simplicity, so congenial to the gospel, is both studied and employed. Here things hidden from the wise and prudent are revealed unto babes; an event, for which the Lord praises the Father. Every true lover of God feels the strength ordained out of the mouths of babes and sucklings, when their answers declare to us, what they know of God, and concerning the lasting effect we may truly say, we cast our bread upon the waters, and shall find it after many days.

(To be continued in our next.)